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Review of progress in the implementation of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in the Central African Republic

I. Assessment of commitments by the Peacebuilding Commission

1. Since the adoption of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in the Central African Republic, the Peacebuilding Commission has stepped up its engagement with the Central African Republic, and considerable efforts have been made to increase the focus of the international community on the country, including through the sensitization and mobilization of existing and potential donors and relevant actors by the Chair of the Central African Republic configuration. Specific efforts by the Chair include visits to a number of donor capitals (Washington, D.C., Brussels, Rome, Bern and Paris) and to institutions (the European Commission, the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank) and démarches in connection with organizations (the Inter-Parliamentary Union (IPU), Parliamentarians for Global Action, the International Development Law Organization, the Clinton Foundation, Caritas, the Order of Malta). Within the United Nations system, the Chair intensified contacts with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), the Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict, the Representative of the Secretary-General on the human rights of internally displaced persons, the Mediation Support Unit of the Department of Political Affairs and other actors that could potentially play a more significant role in the Central African Republic.

2. More specifically, over the past six months the Peacebuilding Commission and its members have focused their attention on a small number of priorities, in particular disarmament, demobilization and reintegration in the overall context of security sector reform, and the preparatory phase of the general elections, which are due to take place in 2010. The Commission has also closely followed developments in the development hubs project.

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Security sector reform and disarmament, demobilization and reintegration

3. With regard to security sector reform, the Chair conducted a number of sensitization missions to various capitals and institutions to mobilize resources and to drum up support for the donor meeting to be held in Bangui on 29 October and for the possible holding of a resource-mobilization round table in the coming months. The Chair has continued his advocacy role with a view to ensuring that the appropriate linkages between disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and security sector reform are in place. Members of the Peacebuilding Commission have been forthcoming to some extent with the provision of technical and financial assistance to the authorities of the Central African Republic in support of their efforts to reorganize and deploy well-trained and equipped security forces throughout the territory. Overall, France and the European Commission have been major financial contributors to the security sector reform process and the Mission for the Consolidation of Peace in the Central African Republic of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). Other bilateral donors have supported the training of the country's military and police forces, including the gendarmerie, as well as providing technical advice for the drafting of the law on military programming.

4. Over the past six months, the Commission has focused intensely on the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process in the country. In addition to playing a role in mobilizing resources and providing technical assistance to resolve bottlenecks in the context of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process — such as the funding for the military observers from ECCAS — the Commission continued to receive information on the ongoing developments in the elaboration, finalization and adoption of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration project document, in the context of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration steering committee at the country level. The Chair engaged further still, participating in regular United Nations-led coordination meetings of the partners involved in the preparations for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration and facilitating coordinated solutions to problems arising as a result of negotiations on the programme document and with regard to the deployment of military observers by ECCAS. The Chair maintained pressure on all relevant stakeholders to ensure that a transparent and accountable funding mechanism would be devised for all funds made available for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration. Financial support for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration project was provided by the Peacebuilding Fund and the European Commission, as well as UNDP. ECCAS signed a technical agreement with the Central African Republic to provide 31 military observers for disarmament, demobilization and reintegration, funded by the European Commission, through its African Peace Facility. The Peacebuilding Fund also supported the UNICEF programme for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of child soldiers.

Good governance and the rule of law

5. The inclusive political dialogue and the implementation of its recommendations and conclusions was viewed by the Peacebuilding Commission as a necessary step for the creation of conditions for sustainable peace consolidation in the country. A limited number of priority actions have been on the radar of the Commission during the reporting period. While some progress was made in key

areas, notably in preparation for next year's general elections, much remains to be done in other areas.

6. Over the past six months the Peacebuilding Commission has advocated for the early revision and adoption of the electoral code with a view to enabling the speedy establishment of the Joint Independent Electoral Commission and the nomination of its members. The Peacebuilding Commission has pledged to mobilize financial and technical support for the organization of the general elections in 2010. An electoral assistance assessment mission, led by the Department of Political Affairs, has identified, together with the national counterparts, areas where the support of the international community will be needed. The European Commission has earmarked $5.7 million for the elections. The Chair has been actively involved in preparing the country's disarmament, demobilization and reintegration programme, a necessary precondition for the holding of the 2010 elections in a stable security environment.

7. Considerable efforts have been deployed by some members of the Commission (the World Bank, the European Commission, France and UNDP) to strengthen the country's institutional and control frameworks through the provision of technical assistance and capacity-building measures. The Chair encouraged a number of organizations (including the International Development Law Organization, the IPU and Parliamentarians for Global Action) to consider ways in which they could support the authorities of the Central African Republic in their area of work. The Peacebuilding Fund has supported a series of projects to facilitate reconciliation, promoting community radio, enhancing the autonomy of women affected by conflict, supporting women leaders in conflict zones and providing support for the holding of the inclusive political dialogue, with the overall goal of promoting a culture of peace. The European Commission, the World Bank, France and other donors have provided financial support for projects with a similar focus. Important support was provided by members of the Commission for projects aimed at improving the equitable provision of justice and the fight against impunity. Funding was provided by France, Ireland, the Netherlands and UNDP. In addition, one project by the European Commission and a number of projects by the World Bank are aimed at improving the business climate. More efforts are needed in the area of gender, including equal access for women in State institutions, as well as to support vocational training for unemployed youth.

Development hubs

8. The preparatory phase of the development hubs has started in earnest. The United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-Habitat) recently completed 10 regional needs assessment studies ("monographies"), which were validated locally. A national validation workshop was held in October 2009. Emerging priority areas include access to basic social services, basic administrative infrastructure and financial poverty. The implementation of the project is scheduled to begin early in 2010. The Commission remains convinced of the crucial importance of the development hubs project, as it pertains to the revitalization of communities affected by conflict and to the reintegration element of the country's disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process.

9. The Commission has continued to advocate, with limited success, for funding for the development hubs projects, and it will play an important role once the final funding requirements have been determined. Funding gaps are expected to be

significant, despite commitments by the European Commission (€40 million) and others. The Commission will also continue to advocate with the Government and with all international partners for a coordinated approach to the development hub strategy, which should be expanded to the parts of the country previously affected by conflict. The Government of the Central African Republic has yet to establish a technical committee to ensure the critical national ownership of the project.

II. Assessment of commitments by the Government of the Central African Republic

10. As a part of the first formal review under the provisions of the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding in the Central African Republic, the Follow-up Committee met in order to (a) assess the progress made in implementing the Strategic Framework for Peacebuilding; (b) take stock of progress in the implementation of Government and civil society commitments; and (c) highlight recommendations and lessons learned.

11. The Follow-up Committee reviewed the three priority areas in terms of both Government and civil society commitments. The area-by-area examination drew attention to the following results and levels of implementation.

Security sector reform and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process

12. Of the 29 activities identified in the three priority actions for this area, 11 have been fully implemented, 11 are being implemented and seven have not been implemented. Progress has been made in a number of sectors, including institutional reform, human and institutional capacity-building, human rights and the creation of an environment that is conducive to peace and to the restoration of trust and confidence between the people and the defence and security forces. The process of disarmament, demobilization and reintegration has seen particular progress.

13. All priority actions for this area have been assessed, namely, reorganizing and deploying well-trained and equipped defence and security forces throughout the country; restoring and enhancing trust between the people and Government institutions; and ensuring disarmament, demobilization and reintegration of former combatants and community reconstruction. The outputs achieved can essentially be summarized as follows.

(a) Activities implemented:

(i) Promulgation of the Act on Military Programming on 14 July 2009;

(ii) Establishment of the Committee on Follow-up to the Inclusive Political Dialogue;

(iii) Establishment on 29 January 2009 of the Steering Committee for the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process, which held its first meeting on 3 February 2009;

(iv) Organization from 17 to 19 March 2009 of the Independent Electoral Commission campaign on security sector reform. A practical guide was issued

on 2 October 2009, and a seminar on parliamentary capacity-building for security sector reform was held on 30 October 2009.

(b) Activities currently being implemented:

(i) In the area of human rights, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), UNICEF and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) cooperated with the Ministry of Defence and the Ministry of Internal Security to organize continuous training sessions in international humanitarian law and human rights;

(ii) Development of new regulations on general discipline and of a military code of conduct; regular payment of salaries and comprehensive food allowances;

(iii) Organization of several activities in conflict zones including the distribution of food supplies in such hinterland towns as Paoua, Bozoum, Kaga Bandoro, Kabo, Ndélé and Obo; renovation of a hospital and administrative buildings in Obo; renovation of schools and bridges in cooperation with the local population; organization of an open day.

Some activities were not implemented, either because they depended on the completion of other activities or owing to lack of funds. Two examples are the construction of barracks for Gendarmerie brigades and of armouries for detachments of the Armed Forces of the Central African Republic.

Good governance and the rule of law

14. Of the 44 activities identified in the three priority actions for this area, nine have been fully implemented, 28 are being implemented and seven have not been implemented. Progress has been made in a number of sectors, including implementing the recommendations of the inclusive political process; institutional and human capacity-building; establishing oversight over the institutions of the Republic; taking ownership of human rights and rights of the child; and fostering an enabling environment for business, peace and restoring trust. Owing to the cross-cutting nature of governance, some of these activities depend on the action taken in other areas.

15. All priority actions for this area have been assessed, namely: organizing credible and transparent presidential, legislative and municipal elections; strengthening the institutional framework and institutional oversight and making it more transparent; promoting a culture of peace, democracy and national reconciliation; improving the delivery and quality of basic public services and enhancing the capacities of State institutions to provide them; ensuring equitable justice and combating impunity; improving the business climate; and ensuring sound management of national resources within a protected environment, and ensuring an equitable distribution of State revenues. The outputs can essentially be summarized as follows.

(a) Activities implemented:

(i) Promulgation of the amended Electoral Code; establishment of the Independent Electoral Commission under Decree No. 09.316 of 8 October 2009;

(ii) Promulgation of the revised Act on the High Council of the Judiciary as Act No. 09.014 of 8 August 2009; enactment on 17 September 2009 of Decree No. 09.296 confirming the election of the President, the Vice-President and the members of the High Court of Justice; enactment and promulgation of the Act on the organization and functioning of the High Court of Justice;

(iii) Promulgation of the Mining Code on 20 April 2009; issuance of the implementing legislation on 30 April 2009. The Central African Republic began the process of joining the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), became a member, and submitted its first report on 23 March 2009;

(iv) Establishment of the National Committee against Corruption on 31 July 2008;

(v) Establishment of EITI — Central African Republic, creating a framework for the proper management of natural resources; promulgation of the Forestry Code, Mining Code, Water Code, Electricity Code and Environmental Code; adoption of a national energy policy paper; organization of a round table of the Sectoral Committee on Water and Sanitation;

(vi) Regular payment of salaries;

(vii) In accordance with the Mining Code and the Forestry Code, a share of the revenue derived from the sale of natural resources is given to local authorities.

(b) Activities currently being implemented:

(i) Implementation of the 2010 electoral process, which is now awaiting the mobilization of resources;

(ii) Establishment by the Order of 28 March 2008 of a national committee tasked with formulating a plan for the promotion and protection of human rights; establishment of the framework for the different human rights agencies; adoption on 4 May 2009 of the State report on human rights in the Central African Republic;

(iii) Establishment of the Committee on Follow-up to the Inclusive Political Dialogue, which is awaiting the funding that will permit its proper functionality;

(iv) The Media Observatory was provided with equipment. The Bimbo broadcasting centre was expanded. Three local radio stations in Nola, Berberati and Bambari were given logistical equipment. Projects entitled "Speaking Out and Reconciliation" and "Community Radio" were implemented in partnership with the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO). The projects encompass some of the priority actions for media capacity-building. A ministerial order has been signed appointing the heads and the 16 delegates of radio stations promoting reconciliation throughout the country;

(v) Adoption of the General Civil Service Regulations on 25 June 2009; adoption of the draft organic framework for the civil service. The audits of the last four pilot ministries are nearing completion. A simplified procedure for the management of public-sector staff has been in place since 8 May 2009. An action plan for civil service reform was adopted in June 2009;

(vi) Construction of two courthouses in the Nana Gribizi and Ouham areas, respectively, with separate detention centres for women; renovation of courthouses in Ouham Pende and Kemo;

(vii) The one-stop shop for registering a business has been established and is operational. The members of the Chamber of Commerce, Industry, Mines and Crafts were elected on 2 March 2009 and sworn in on 17 April 2009. The renovation of the Chamber building is under way with Government funding of 36 million CFA francs and US$ 100,000 from the International Finance Corporation; quotations are currently being obtained. A permanent consultative framework was established within the Prime Minister's Office. A preliminary draft of the code of commerce was formulated. The Act containing the Central African Republic Investment Charter is undergoing its second reading with reference to the Bis Clim fund;

(viii) Adoption of the Regulations of the National Radiation Protection Agency.

Several other activities are being implemented and are awaiting funding. Two examples are national ownership of the electoral process and the functioning of the Committee on Follow-up to the Inclusive Political Dialogue.

Development hubs

16. The 15 activities identified in the three priority actions for this area are being implemented. Significant progress has still not been seen because of the novelty of the concept in the Central African Republic. It is only after the investment phase of all the plans of action of the development hubs has been completed that progress achieved as a result of the strategic planning for the development hubs carried out by UN-Habitat can be measured. The progress made in other areas is creating momentum for the implementation of activities in this area.

17. All priority actions for this area have been assessed, namely: ensuring that people have equitable access to administrative services and high-quality basic social services; supporting the revival of economic activities and promoting income-generating activities; and supporting the restructuring of communities and the revival of grass-roots community organizations. The outputs achieved can essentially be summarized as follows:

(a) Incorporating the reorganization and the strengthening of the capacity of decentralized administrative services in the different action plans for development hubs;

(b) Continuing to provide humanitarian assistance to people in need, particularly in areas affected by conflict;

(c) Continuing to prepare regional studies to guide the targeting of intervention packages planned in the development hubs;

(d) Adopting an energy policy document that incorporates the development of rural electrification through the existing Central African Republic Rural Electrification Agency (Agence Centrafricaine d'Electrification Rurale); and,

(e) Identifying the most pressing needs in priority economic sectors (mining, agriculture, fishing) that could benefit from international assistance, partnership or

investment, and incorporating these needs in different subsectoral strategies for the preparation of round tables.

It should be noted that some completed activities have been maintained in order to consolidate the gains.

Assessment of commitments by civil society

Security sector reform and the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration process

18. All priority actions for this area have been assessed, namely: (i) reorganizing and deploying well-trained and equipped defence and security forces throughout the country; (ii) restoring and enhancing trust between the people and Government institutions. The outputs achieved can essentially be summarized as follows. Of the 14 commitments undertaken by civil society, only 2 have begun to be implemented, namely:

(a) Educating people about their rights and duties through the Central African Republic Association of Women Lawyers (Association des Femmes Juristes Centrafricaines), which has subcontracted with the Danish Refugee Council; and,

(b) Helping to publicize laws and regulations through the Central African Republic Association of Women Lawyers and the Central African Republic Inter-NGO Council (CIONGCA).

Good governance and the rule of law

19. All priority actions for this area have been assessed, namely: (i) organizing credible and transparent presidential, legislative and municipal elections; (ii) strengthening the institutional framework and institutional oversight, and making it more transparent; (iii) promoting a culture of peace, democracy and national reconciliation; (iv) improving the delivery and quality of basic public services and enhancing the capacities of State institutions to provide them; (v) ensuring equitable justice and combating impunity; (vi) improving the business climate; and (vii) ensuring sound management of national resources within a protected environment, and ensuring an equitable distribution of State revenues. The outputs can essentially be summarized as follows. Of the seven commitments undertaken by civil society, only one activity has been implemented. Two activities are being implemented:

(a) Activities implemented: participation of CIONGCA in the revision of the electoral code;

(b) Activities currently being implemented:

(i) The awareness-raising campaign in Bangui on women's rights, conducted by the Central African Republic Women's Organization (Organisation des Femmes Centrafricaines) in cooperation with the international non-governmental organization Mercy Corps Scotland; and,

(ii) The awareness-raising campaign being conducted by the Central African Republic Women's Organization and CIONGCA to make people and communities aware of their ownership of and their responsibility for the proper management of natural resources, often one of the first sources of tension.

Development hubs

20. All priority actions for this area have been assessed, namely: ensuring that people have equitable access to administrative services and high-quality basic social services; supporting the revival of economic activities and promoting income-generating activities; and supporting the restructuring of communities and the revival of grass-roots community organizations. The outputs achieved can essentially be summarized as follows. Of the 10 commitments undertaken by civil society, one activity has begun to be implemented:

(a) The International Committee of African Women for Development (CIFAD) promoted income-generating activities in the form of microprojects;

(b) Caritas has equipped cooperatives aimed at reviving farming and livestock production that it helped to establish in Obo with suitable tools, inputs and breeding stock.